

MM93-48

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APR 19 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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Dear FCC,

As a fourth grader
I think educational - tv
is the discovery channel
because it teaches you
about animals and wild-
life and Reading Rainbow
cause it teaches you about
math, social studies, and
physics.

Some programs
aren't educational like
Bart Simpson, D.C. Joe,
Ren and Stimpy and Rowed
with Children. That is
not educational cause of
violence with guns.

Educational is about
Physics, Math, Social Studies,
and Reading.

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List A B C D E _____Sincerely
Bobby Dullea

Dear FCC,

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As a 4 year I thinck
educatshinl tv techis no vilence
and it techis you to help
others.

I thinck that GIGOE
is a bad example.
Because all it shows
is blood and guts fling
evry wear.

I thinck that Full
house is a good example,
Because it has no vilence
and the gise help the
grils with probloms and
the griss help the gise
prodloms.

Thes arr my examples of,
educatshinl and non educatshinl t.v

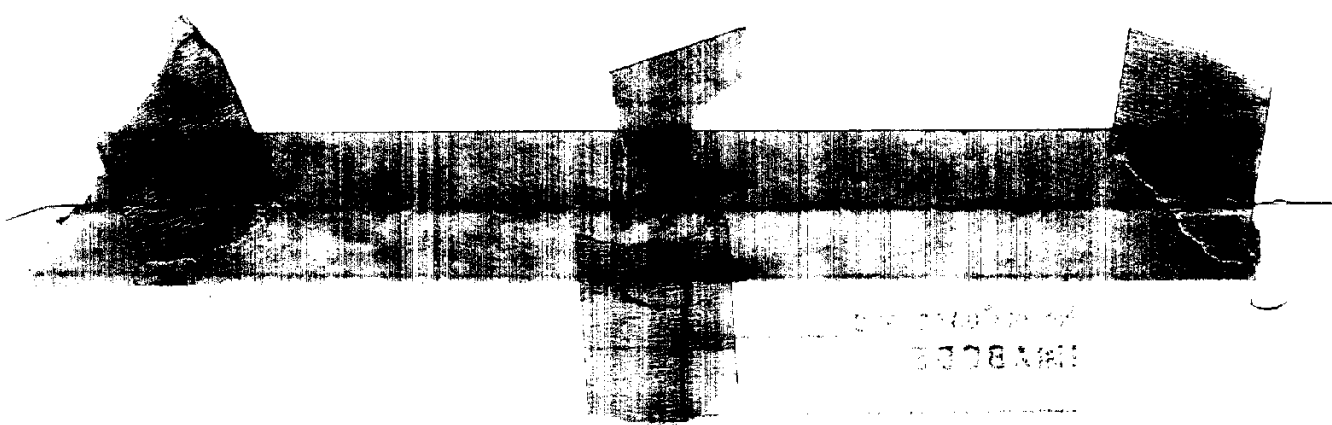
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Sincerely
Richard Shell

Dear FCC,

As a 9 year old I think
that educational tv tech is no
violence and it tech is you to help
others



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SS101

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Dear Fcc,

I think that Sesame Street is educational because it teaches little people how to count, how to spell, and how to do there ABC. I think educational television is when people put on things like National Geographic or things that teaches you about animals.

I think that G.I. Joe is not educational because It show's people shooting other people that they hate. And plus it show's a bad example for the little people.

Sincerely,
Tiffany Carney

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As I 4th grader what is to
give you an idea what educational
t.v. is. Educational t.v. is what kids
want to learn like reading, spelling, writing,
math, science so that kids will at
least learn something for good.
grades in schools. Like Sesame Street,
for example, they teach you how to
count, spell and do math. Here are
some noneducational programs. Like
G.I. Joe it shows bloody murder.
Here are some other programs that
I think are educational like

Mr. Wizard because he shows you
how to do science.

Barney and friends because they
teach you how to do math,
science, reading and writing.

Sincerely,

Mark

PS please try to make it
possible

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MM93-400

APR 19 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Dear F.C.,

clams 10 years old,
and I watch alot of TV
and alot of them are
Educational. Kids that are
younger then me need
something like that. The
very Educational for
small kids are Barney
and Friends, Core Bares, and
Sesame Street. For a little
bit older like my age are
Discovery, and Reading
Rainbow... These programs
make kids want to learn
and they are fun to watch.

I-I Joe is not Educational because it teaches you how to shoot people. Educational TV is a program that teaches you a lesson and to my point of view, Educational TV has a moral. I could tell if it teaches you the

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basic issue, like Discovery,
Sesame Street, Barney and
Friends, Reading Rainbow,
and Care Bears. These
episodes are the type of
shows we need. A lot of
parents and I think there
is too much violence on
TV and most parents don't
teach what is right and
wrong anymore. TV is the
only thing our kids listen
to, so, make it fun and
Educational!

Sincerely, Collette
Gartenbein

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Federal Communication Commission
Mass Media Bureau
Attn: Children's Programming
Washington D.C., 20554

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OFFICE OF SECRETARY

RT

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Dear Children's Programming Department:

When I was five years old I took a shovel and hit my seven year old brother over the head with it. I expected laughter to follow, and anticipated my shovel to go "boi-oi-oiing!" Instead, there were tears, shock, dismay, an angry and concerned mother—and I was stunned to discover that my shovel landed with a dull thud, producing no great magical sounds.

Fortunately, I was not strong enough to do great physical damage to my brother. However, my point here is that this incident was a direct result of the programming I watched as a child—specifically, my cherished *Road Runner* and *Bugs Bunny* cartoons. I was not an aggressive child, but I was fun-loving. We all laughed at these shows—and I wanted to get a laugh. It was as simple as that.

As a teenager, I was bright and attractive. However, when I compared myself with the women and girls in advertisements on television, I was tragically "ugly, and fat." Hence, I began the binge and purge cycles of bulimia, and it was not until I was 23 years old that I decided that I was okay the way I looked and regained control of my life.

Now, as the 32 year old mother of three small children under the age of seven, I am vividly aware of the power of television. My husband and I recently moved our family from Los Angeles to Oklahoma. In the process, we were without television for nearly a month. The transformation in our children was dramatic. Not only was the environment of Oklahoma a positive influence on our children, but without television and most of their toys still packed away in boxes, our children were forced to do something that they normally were not pushed to do—*use their imagination*. They began to play outside, and invented games using "toys" such as dirt, sticks, stairs, leaves and grass. At first they were hesitant, and we had to plant ideas in their heads, like "pretend you are an Indian in the wilderness." It was not long before they caught on to *this* magic, and on Saturday mornings—even though we had installed cable television—they willingly skipped their morning cartoons and blasted out the back door. They, in fact, became calmer, gentler little people. The insensitive attitudes, and odd language which they had honed from television's cues suddenly disappeared.

My children still watch television on occasion, especially before or after dinner. However, we have always been extremely protective of their viewing habits. Early on, we devised a "Parent Approved Television Viewing" chart which we would update each new viewing season, and post in front of the television—and we *stuck to it*. But, even with quality shows like *Lamb Chop's Playalong*, *Barney*, *Fred Penner's Place* and *The Elephant Show* we cannot manage to edit the garbage in between. In fact, I do not think that television lacks quality programming (although, it would be ideal to see *every* program become a "quality" program), it lacks quality advertising. Even the gentlest of shows on *Nickelodeon* does not escape the horrors of previews for shows like *Are You Afraid of the Dark?* I have not seen this particular show—it may be good—but, I do not think that these scary promos should be on at a time when my 2, 5 and 6 year old can view them. Oddly enough, I believe that the *Ghostbusters* cartoon has been

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instrumental in quelling any fear of the dark which my children may have experienced. It has turned ghosts and goblins and scary monsters into beings that can even be managed by a "dorky" character like Peter—and no matter what their size, these creatures can be put in a box!

I do think that there is too much sex and violence on television—especially during the daytime. I think it is strange that at a time when our society is fortunately focused on preventing (and intervening in) domestic violence and child molestation we are allowing our televisions to control us and our thinking, and we continue to allow our children to view the most abhorant television shows. There is no doubt that prevention is the best medicine regarding children's television, and the greatest power that parents can wield over programming is to push the "off" button or to change the channel. Sadly, too many parents are addicted to T.V., and that certainly does not help to set an example for their children.

Fighting television stations who are trying to make money is not the way to win this war of morals. It is the public who continues to enslave themselves to programming by accepting that what they see is what they'll get. They may not like the programs, but feel powerless, and resign themselves to "vegging out" in front of the T.V. at the end of the day, and allow the television to "babysit" their children. How often have you heard people say, "I don't really *watch* television. I just *use* it to relax." I have heard this often, and by some otherwise highly intelligent people. My husband and I have even tested our children by asking them what they were just watching on television, and we found that they haven't a clue. The T.V. set is strangely hypnotic, and I find this to be disturbing. *We* have remedied this problem by frequently discussing the shows (the premise, the characters, the purpose, the moral, etc.) with our children. This has created more interactive viewing by them, and television has become more thought provoking to them—but, they had to be *taught* how to do this. We always make ourselves available for their questions or concerns about a show although we may not be able to sit and watch it with them. It makes a difference.

Educating the public about the positive and negative effects of television seems to be the only way that we will make a dent in the conscience of the programmers. Releasing guidelines on what constitutes a "proper" program for each age group is good, and encouraging parents to discuss controversial programs is important. I do think, however, that there should be some very clear restrictions on the broadcasting of advertisements. There are many advertisements which should be restricted to late night television, and *many* which should not be shown at all. Commercials which depict young children and adolescents as extraordinarily sexual human beings should be banned. (Has anyone considered that these are *real* children who are being asked to act in this way for these commercials? If I were to have my children perform for me in this manner in my home, I would probably be arrested.) What ever happened to the delightful "Good & Plenty" choo-choo train commercials, for instance? Today, kids dance to the funky rhythm of rap music, wear dark glasses, spike their hair, and ask the super-cool question: *Can you handle it?* They're talking about a Hershey's bar for God's sake! I have nothing against an *honest* expression of individuality, but I do not want my kids to think that to be "cool" they need to behave like the kids in the commercials—or, that they simply **MUST** eat a Hershey's bar. It sounds like they're pushing a drug or something. I think that this is terrifying behavior to instill in a child. What will happen when they actually have a friend hold out a piece of rock cocaine to them, with the dare, "Can you handle it?" I am striving to teach my children to listen to their conscience, *not* to accept dares!

Equally appalling is Nickelodeon's incessant put-down of parents and teachers. I find this ironic, since

some of the best children's programming on television outside of public broadcasting is on Nickelodeon. The mockery they make of parents and teachers is a far cry from Dennis' understandable exclamation of, "Jeepers, Mom," when asked to clean up his room before going outside to play. Parents and teachers are represented as goofy, uncool, straight-laced, boring bimbos who have no life outside of pestering and scolding their children. As a mother who works hard to balance an atmosphere of loving discipline and friendship with her children, I resent this.

It seems to me that, sadly, even Sesame Street has "sold out" to commercialism. Some of those Muppets are looking a bit too cool these days. Rap music has even infiltrated the show, and this bothers me because I am not entirely convinced that rap music is "non-toxic" to its listeners. (The value of rap music as an artistic expression is another discussion entirely.) I have tried to rationalize this transition with the understanding that they are trying to get important educational messages to children by using a child's language. They apparently have concluded from the success of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and other shows that children respond to "cool" and to "rap." Don't they realize that *they* are in charge of teaching children *language*? Thank goodness for the steadfastness of *Mr. Rogers*. Parents may think he's boring and slow, but who is his show for anyway? *Small children*. Give the kids a chance to learn and grow. Gentleness and patience is *learned* and fortunately Mr. Rogers is not afraid to teach these virtues. He also doesn't need flashing neon signs to grab a child's attention. A soft voice, an unpretentious nature, and a few hand puppets are all he needs.

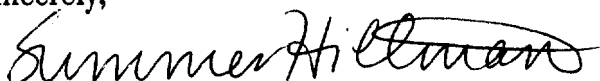
As for the *Disney Channel*, I think that it is both a blessing and a curse. Uninformed people will say, "If you are so concerned about children's programming, why don't you subscribe to the Disney channel? We have watched the previews of this channel on cable. There are some good shows, and there are some shows that are as trashy as anything that I have found on the regular networks. Thankfully, Disney does seem to excel in the area of film making—I appreciate the re-release of the classics, and the new movies are getting better with each try. I think that fantasy is wonderful for children. Educational shows are great, but I think that fantasy is the stuff that life should be made of when you are a child. It builds that "dare to dream" character that will help them excel, and find the creativity within to always see options in life—to find a way out, and to battle the "scary monsters" that figuratively speaking come our way.

As for *The Flintstones*, which has gotten the short-end-of-the-stick on the news lately, I really like that show. I grew up with Fred and Barney (I even named my fish after them) and *The Flintstones* was my first color television show. This show, albeit goofy and rather imperfect from a feminist's perspective, taught me that ultimately, being honest, tender, loving and forgiving were great virtues. When Fred went ga-ga over the local buxom babe, he ultimately came around to reality and realized that the most beautiful woman in the world was at home—named Wilma. When a fight broke out between these stone-age neighbors, they would ultimately let go of their grudges and realize that life was less than perfect without good friends. When wealth was within their reach and greed boiled in their blood, they soon discovered that the best things in life were free—love and friendship. They taught that "crime doesn't pay," and that "life isn't a bowl of cherries" but that you can still reap the real rewards in the end. So what if Fred barreled into the house screaming "Wilma!" and Wilma hopped to with his Stegasaurus steak. I'm a pretty liberated woman myself, but I still don't think there's anything wrong with being tolerant of my husband's quirks, or wanting to make him feel comfortable. This is all a part of love. Shoot—I mean, Fred sure "hops to" when he thinks Wilma is pregnant. It's all rather innocuous and sweet, and I believe that there is always that element of respect between Fred and Wilma. Especially

when you contrast Fred and Wilma with Betty and Barney. Barney is the tolerant and easy-going male. He's generally honest and maintains integrity, unless Fred bullies him into action. It makes for a lot of fun. Half the couples in the nation could probably learn a thing or two from this show. After all, at least these two couples haven't divorced.

That's about it for my opinions about children's programming. Actually, I could go on for days. I hope the FCC can figure out a solution to this dilemma. Short of prohibition, I don't know how you are going to lick the programmers. I can write letters of protest, letters of support (regarding sensitive programming), stop buying products which are advertised negatively, change channels, talk to my kids, and (if necessary) throw out my T.V. set in the meantime. Good luck. I think Clinton is a good man, and I think we are all taking the first step in the right direction by talking about the problem. Healing begins with understanding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Summer Hillman". The signature is fluid and somewhat stylized, with the first name "Summer" being more prominent than the last name "Hillman".

Summer Hillman
323 South Elm Street
Sapulpa, OK 74066



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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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Corner Store Entertainment, Ltd., 3601 W. Olive, 6th Floor, Burbank CA 91501

F.C.C.
2025 M Street N.W.
Washington D.C. 20554

Attn: Room 8210

To whom it may concern:

We are a television writing and producing team, chiefly in the area of children's programming. Beyond this we are concerned parents, grandparent, and former educators.

The enclosed article from DAILY VARIETY (March 3, 1993) caught our attention, especially the last paragraph of the article which indicates that you are currently seeking comments on how to emphasize education in children's broadcasting. We applaud your efforts.

As you can see by our credit list, we have been guilty of cranking out blatantly commercial scripts for children's programming. In the last couple of years, we have become increasingly frustrated with this type of writing and programming.

We find ourselves feeling empty after writing for series which are little more than info-commercials designed to sell toys and video games. To this end, we have been more selective, by refusing to write violent and crassly commercial shows. We, of course, have paid the price; check out the California unemployment rates.

Believing that children are an endangered species, we have been developing entertaining children's shows infused with information, education, and values. With the new breath of conscience in Washington, perhaps these sorts of shows will see the light of air-time.

If there is any way we can help, through our experience, we are at your service.

Sincerely,

Jack Hanrahan
Jack Hanrahan

Eleanor Burian-Mohr
Eleanor Burian-Mohr

cc: Hilary Clinton

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Corner Store Entertainment, Ltd., 982 E. Athens Street, Altadena CA 91001

JACK HANRAHAN AND ELEANOR BURIAN-MOHR

WRITERS

(818) 955-5670, (818) 955-5647, FAX (818) 955-5559

**Rep: Monteiro Rose, Inc. - Candy Monteiro
17514 Ventura Blvd., Suite 205, Encino CA 91316
(818) 501-1177, FAX: (818) 501-1194**

CREDIT LIST

COMBINED CREDITS

Inspector Gadget Saves Christmas
Sonic the Hedgehog
Super Dave
Classics Illustrated
Richard Scarry's Best Show Ever
Growing Up Wild (BBC/Time-Life)
Super Mario Brothers 4
Capt Zed and the Zee Zone
A Bunch of Munsch
The Adventures of Dynamo Duck - Pilot, Bible, Scripts
Spiff and Hercules
Where's Waldo?
Pepe Plata - English Lang. Story Editors, Pilot, Bible, Scripts
Camp Candy
Zaktales - Story Editors, Scripts
King Koopa and the Fox Kids Club (live action) (Emmy Nominee) - Pilot, Bible, Story Editors, Scripts
Tom and Jerry Kids
Maxie's World
Super Mario Brothers Super Show (Creative Consultants)
The New Yogi Bear
Fisher Price: "Some Day Me" Videos
Snorks
Hello Kitty's Furry Tale Theater
The New Archies
Heathcliff
Duck Tales
Inspector Gadget
The Funtastic Treasure Hunt
Dennis the Menace
The Popples
The Care Bears
DIC Development (1985-present) (DIC, LCI, BBC, Cobra)
(Complete list available on request)

INDIVIDUAL CREDITS

JACK HANRAHAN

Animation

The Mouse Factory (Development, Head Writer - 2 seasons)
The Banana Splits (Head Writer, Story Editor)
Popeye
The Fantastic Four
The Flintstones
Droopy Dog
Pink Panther
Quickie Qualla
Spiderman
Abbott & Costello
Laurel & Hardy

Comedy/Variety

Laugh In-Head Writing Team (first two seasons, EMMY WINNER)
Andy Williams Show (Head Writer, Script Supervisor)
The Jackie Gleason Show
The Ray Stevens Show (Head Writer, Script Supervisor)
The Bobby Darin Show
Sonny and Cher

Dramatic Shows

Little House on the Prairie
Marcus Welby, M.D.
INSIGHT (Paulist Productions)
Police Story
Police Woman
Gibbsville
The Waltons

Sit Coms

Barney Miller
Love Boat
Get Smart
The Jeffersons

Specials and Pilots

Harper Valley, USA
A Last Laugh at the Sixties
Ziggy's Gift (consultant)
TCFC TV Development License
Ultra Man (original story for screenplay)

Books and Publications

What Do You Get?
Beastly Rhymes
Capt. Klutz (with Don Martin)
MAD Magazine
The Great Society Fun and Games Book

FCC opens discussion of Children's Television Act

WASHINGTON — Is the Federal Communications Commission about to add teeth to the Children's Television Act of 1990, which requires TV stations to serve the needs of their moppet audience?

Issuing a deceptively innocuous "request for comments" on the law, the agency yesterday suggested there is a "lack of growth" in children's programming despite the clear obligation of stations to meet the educational needs of kids under the act.

Since passage of the law, the agency said it has reviewed some 320 license renewal applications, the

majority of which demonstrated "adequate" efforts to meet the needs of children. It said it is now time to alert other stations of Congress' intent to "expand and improve" the level of educational and informational programming to tots.

The kidvid law was passed with somewhat passive support from the broadcast industry partly because Congress did not make specific programming demands on stations vis a vis their young audience. Beyond setting commercial limits for children's programming, Congress told stations their service to kids would be considered at renewal time but left it to the FCC to decide what that meant.

The law was nonetheless hailed by kidvid advocates because it left the door open for an activist FCC to ratchet up those obligations if it cared to.

Now in the hands of President Clinton, the commission could easily become that activist agency.

In its notice, the agency suggested that stations may not meet those obligations if they only provide entertainment fare for children, but may soon be judged on their educational and informational programming.

Specifically, it said it may be appropriate to specify that the primary objective of qualifying "core" children's programming should be educational and informational, with entertainment as a secondary goal. It is seeking comments on how to emphasize that priority in regulations.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Susan Masland
3953 Acapulco Dr.
Campbell CA 95008-3821

To whom it may concern:
I am writing to respond to
an article I read in U.S.A. Today
concerning children's program on
TV. I think that the
TV stations should offer
better programs for our
children. In order to have
an educated workforce in the
future we need to provide
more programs to obtain that
goal. Most of the programs
are trash, violent in nature.
I will not watch it or
allow my children because of
the bad quality.

Sincerely

Susan Masland

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

2420 Springwood Drive
Auburn, AL 36830
March 10, 1993

Chief, FCC
Mass Media Bureau
1919 M Street N.W.
Washington D.C. 20615

Dear Sir or Madam:

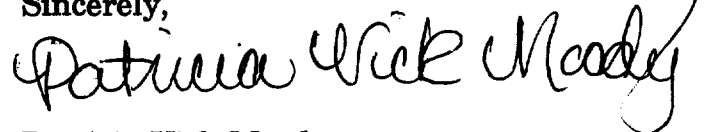
I am writing, as a mother, to encourage you in your steps to enforce the Children's Television Act of 1990. Please keep up the good work and pull the local television stations into compliance!

I just read a half-baked editorial in *USA Today* giving reasons why you shouldn't enforce the act. It was absurd. According to *USA Today*, most parents have plenty of time (and money!) to monitor their child's TV viewing. And if there is a lot of trash in kids' programming, well we should just subscribe to the Disney and Discovery Channels and make trips to the store to rent appropriate video cassettes. Now honestly, how out-of-touch can these editorial writers be? How many parents can realistically monitor their kids at this level?

I do agree with them on one thing. *USA Today* says families know best. Well, please be reassured. Today's busy families would like a little help from you! Only idealistic Northeasterners who do not live in the real world would disagree with your cause and your steps to enforce it.

Go get 'em!

Sincerely,



Patricia Vick Moody

cc: Rep. Edward Markey

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MM 93-48

March 9, 1993

Mass Media Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M St. N.W., Room 314
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Sirs:

Attached please find an unedited E-mail from a staff member of the Irving Public Library. We thought it would add some insight into the controversy regarding children's educational programming.

Sincerely,

Lamar Veatch, Director
Irving Public Library

LV:sg

Attachment

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The National PTA®

National Headquarters
330 North Wabash Avenue, Suite 2100
Chicago, Illinois 60611-3690
(312) 670-6782
Fax: (312) 670-6783

Office of Governmental Relations
2000 L Street N.W., Suite 600
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 331-1380
(202) 331-1406

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BEFORE THE
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

En Banc Hearings on Children's Television

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APR 19 1995

**FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY**

In the Matter Of:

**Policies and Rules
Concerning Children's
Television Programming**

**Revision of Programming
Policies for Television
Broadcast Stations**

)
)
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MM Docket No. 93-48

COMMENTS OF THE NATIONAL PTA

Catherine A. Belter

**National PTA
2000 L Street, N.W.
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20036**

**Vice President for
Legislative Activity**

June 28, 1994

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Mr. Chairman and members of the Federal Communications Commission. I am Catherine A. Belter, National PTA Vice-President for Legislative Activity. The National PTA is comprised of over 6.9 million parents, teachers and other child advocates concerned about improving the quality of television programming for children and youth. Thank you for this opportunity to present the views of many parents nationwide who have been frequently frustrated in their attempts to influence children's television programming while respecting First Amendment freedoms.

I come before this Commission as one of a procession on many National PTA representatives as far back as the 1930's who have petitioned Congress and the regulatory agencies about the need to provide more quality television programming for children and youth. Like my predecessors, I speak not as a legal expert or a researcher but as a parent and long standing child advocate who shares with other parents and citizens the belief that government and the industry must assume their responsibilities for increasing quality television programming for children and families. The FCC should be commended for holding this hearing, but at the same time, I hope that the Commission will take more decisive action than has been customary in the past.

Sadly, even after 60 years of activism, the National PTA is still fighting to ensure quality TV programming. I have just returned from the National PTA's annual convention where over 1,600 delegates wrote cards to Chairman Hundt regarding the state of children's television and the implementation of the Children's Television Act. The Chairman should have received these cards already, but permit me to give you a sampling of some of our local PTA member concerns:

"When I first learned of the Children's Television Act, I thought I saw ahead many great changes. Wrong!! There are hardly any changes at all." Sheila Deputy, Nevada

"I urge the FCC to look at the lack of accountability local TV stations display in my state. When stations in my state are asked their policy of children's programming, they state that 'we do the minimum the law allows because our audience is the adult market.' Often children's programs are offered at 5:30am and not during prime hours when children may be watching." Ginger Dahlquist, Utah

"FCC control is needed to increase the amount of children's programming. Our TV is rarely on at home due to lack of quality programming except on PSAs." Charon Kopek, Missouri

"Television for children is not ready to meet the developmental needs of the nation's youth. This popular media needs to be monitored so that the intent of the Children's Television Act is achieved." Lowell Lattimer, North Dakota

"I am dissatisfied with the lack of response to what is required by the Children's Television Act. We challenge you, just as we challenge our own children, to achieve the world class standards that the President is asking of our educational system." Martha Jones, Indiana

When the Children's Television Act (CTA) passed in 1990, the National PTA was an active and aggressive supporter of the law. We believed this act would be a major force in improving programs for children. As evidenced from the comments above, so did our local PTA members. Our interest extends to assuring that CTA's regulations honor the intent of Congress, which is to meet the "educational and

informational needs of children through the licensee's overall programming, including programming specifically designed to serve such needs."

As requested by this Commission, I am here to address issues "that focus on the Commission's current definition of informational and educational programming broadcaster must air to meet its obligation to children under the Children's Television Act," and to provide the National PTA's views on how well CTA is meeting its objectives under the law. This is a follow-up to the Commission's Notice of Inquiry, 8 FCC CD 1841 (1993) with subsequent comments filed on June 7, 1993. We have forwarded comments to you On May 7, 1993 and June 7, 1993 as part of a coalition of organizations coordinated by the Center for Media Education, MM Docket 93-48.

The airwaves belong to the public and as a result the broadcast industry has an obligation to serve the needs of children. The Federal Communications Act of 1933 mandates this responsibility to youngsters and the obligation is reinforced by the Children's Television Act of 1990. As you know, each local commercial station must serve the program interests of children if the government is to grant them a license. The federal government must assure that the broadcasters comply.

Frequently, the industry has fought against federal regulations holding them accountable in meeting their obligation to the children's interest. Similarly, they have also resisted voluntary self-

regulation to improve TV programs. Whether the issue is increased children's programming, unfair and deceptive advertising targeted to children, or the amount of violence shown during the times that children watch TV broadcasters have failed to put the interest of children forward.

How tiresome to hear the same old industry cries of censorship, denial of freedom of the press, severe economic burden, and unconscionable meddling "by those uninformed parents" when we reminded them of their public interest requirements. When given the freedom to choose, commercial broadcasters consistently opt not to provide educational programming for children. The industry often presumes that the airwaves are its own private domain, and treats children as "customers" to be marketed to rather than a "public" to be served.

For several decades, the National PTA and other child advocacy organizations have criticized the industry for its shortcomings in this area. The Commission also documented the industry's failure to heed its 1974 children's educational programming guidelines (see NPRM: Children's Television Programming and Advertising Practices, January 9, 1980, at para. 28). Moreover, numerous studies (et al., "Children Television Programming and the Free Market Solution," Journalism Quarterly, 67, 147-156, 1990; Wartella et al, "Television and Beyond: Children's Video Media In One Community," Commonwealth Research, 17, 45-46, 1990) have established a clear pattern of decline in children's educational programming on commercial broadcast stations following FCC's deregulation (Report and Order: Children's Television

Programming and Advertising Practices, January 4, 1984) of its 1974 guidelines.

Still, the federal government has not been overly ambitious in developing strong rules and measures to encourage and enforce compliance to either the public interest provisions of the FCC Act or CTA. Rather, the government itself is resistant to take on the powerful and well monied networks despite government findings concerning the deplorable state of children's television. This apathy begs the question as to whether the FCC values corporate interests over children's interests. We hope this hearing will yield results by the FCC that demonstrate fair, but decisive measures in increasing quality children's television.

Indeed, this passiveness was why Congress chose to enact a statutory requirement forcing stations to deliver such programming as this content is deemed essential to the public interest. The CTA defines the educational and information needs of children as "programming that furthers the positive development of the child in many respects, including the child's cognitive and intellectual or emotional/social needs." This definition gives station's great discretion because it includes a child's social and emotional needs. But, the FCC's regulations are so broad that stations can claim almost anything as educational and informational.

Two different types of programming service can be considered: (1) a stations' overall programming, which refers to content that is

primarily intended for general audiences but which holds demonstrable educational value for children, and (2) programming specifically designed to serve the educational needs of children. The latter of these two approaches clearly represents what the National PTA thought was the most valuable type of programming when it supported the CTA. Yet, it is the one that broadcasters find the most difficult to attain.

A 1993 study from the University of California Department of Communications, (Broadcaster's License Renewal Claims Regarding Children's Educational Programming, by Dr. Dale Kunkel) found that stations provided an average of 3.4 hours per week (less than one-half hour per day) of regularly scheduled standard length programming. These data were collected from stations' license renewal applications that were submitted to the FCC throughout 1992. Broadcasters claim these shows are specifically designed to serve the educational and information needs of children. Included are programs of dubious value such as *G.I. Joe*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, *The Jetsons*, *Bucky O'Hare*, *Tale Spin*, *Duck Tales*, *Chip 'n' Dale*, *Rescue Rangers* and *Casper*. PSAs and other programming of 30 seconds to three minutes in duration were also included.

No independent assessment has reported the legitimacy of the educational value of the programming claims by stations. One can reasonably conclude that the 3.4 hours per week is artificially inflated when reconciled with the CTA standards to programs "specifically designed for children." Equally disturbing is that just